

U.S. Patent Application No. 10/071,672
Reply to Office Action dated December 10, 2003

1610-85

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Office Action dated December 10, 2003. This amendment is timely filed.

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-8 were pending in the application. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112. Claims 1, 2 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Claims 3-6 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Objections were raised to the specification and abstract. The objections and rejections are set out in greater detail below.

I. Objections to the specification

The specification was objected due to an informality. Applicant has amended the specification to overcome the objection. Withdrawal of the objection is thus respectfully requested.

II. Objections to the Abstract

The abstract was objected to for minor informalities which are corrected herein. Withdrawal of the objection is therefore respectfully requested.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Appropriate amendments are made to the claims herein to overcome this rejection, withdrawal of which is respectfully requested.

VI. Rejections on Art

Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,820,114 to Inaba et al., claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated

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by U.S. Patent No. 5,396,714 to Sturges, Jr. et al, and claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 63-57128 to Kasai. Claims 3-6 and 8 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


The subject matter of claims 2 and 3 have been incorporated into claim 1 herein, and claims 2 and 3 are cancelled. Claims 1 and 4-8 are thus believed patentable and in condition for allowance.

VII. Conclusion

Applicant has made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicant invites the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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